

10 Steps to Successful FPC Virtual Meetings with Congress

Once you have set a date and time for a Virtual Hill meeting with your Member of Congress it is important that you follow these 10 simple steps to ensure your virtual conversation is meaningful, a good use of time for both you and the legislator and flows well for all involved.

Before the Meeting

- 1) **Select a Leader:** In most cases the leader of each Hill meeting should be you and your team. Make sure your team members are aware of their participation and role during the meeting. In some cases, such as in meetings with Senators, it may be better for your State President or another volunteer to lead the meeting. In any case, it is important the Member of Congress knows who is serving as the moderator and who is fielding questions from the audience.
- 2) **Create an Agenda:** Each meeting should be no longer than 30 minutes and should usually run between 15 and 20 minutes. Be sure to convey the agenda to all participants on your team before the call and make them aware of their speaking roles. It is a more dynamic experience when you have several speakers offering their perspectives and expertise during a virtual Hill meeting.

During the Meeting

- 3) **Welcome and Introductions:** Welcome the Congressperson and introduce yourself and your team. This lets your legislator know who is in the room and who to direct their comments toward. You can also have each member introduce themselves and give background about where they live and offer any anecdotal stories about having met with the legislator previously, seen them at a community event, etc.
- 4) **DO NOT Take Pictures or Record:** Avoid taking screenshots/iPhone pictures or recording the meeting in any way unless you have received permission from congressional staff in advance. Your legislator is treating this as a closed-door, off-the-record meeting and so should you. This will allow both you and the legislator to be more candid in conversation and will assure the congressperson their conversations will not end up on the internet or be taken out of context in another forum.
- 5) **Give Market Brief Overview:** Legislators are very interested in the real estate market right now and how it relates to getting the economy back on track. Please be prepared to offer a brief update of how the market is doing in your area and any anecdotal accounts of what you and your colleagues are hearing from your respective clients.
- 6) **Thank Congress for Their Work on COVID-19/Provide NAR Federal Advocacy Resources:** NAR is doing a significant amount of work to keep REALTORS and the surrounding economy whole during this unprecedented time. Choose **2 points** to inform them from our [NAR Federal Advocacy](#)

[Resources 1-pager](#) or contact your NAR Political Representative. Make sure to provide the full document to staff before the meeting.

- 7) **Tell a Story Using the SPIT Technique to Highlight NAR Policy Priorities:** When it comes to your Hill meetings, be prepared to tell a personal story to make your point about one of our [NAR policy priorities](#). Explain through a short anecdote or story how the policy issue impacts you directly. Officials recognize the time it takes to personalize a message and will focus their efforts on those communications. As a reminder, one way to develop your story is to use the “SPIT Technique.”

SPIT is an acronym as follows:

S = Specific: Be as specific as possible about what the Congressperson can do. For example, “we would like you to cosponsor a bill” is better than “our practice provides valuable services.”

P = Personal: Messages that are based on compelling stories have more of an impact. As noted above, think about why this matters to you, as well as specific people you have served. How did you help them? The overall community? This really helps you focus on the benefits you provide.

I = Informative: In addition to that personal story, you’ll want to have some valuable information to back it up. Some of the information you might want to gather includes:

- Number of people impacted
- Number of people employed
- Specifics on programs provided
- Reach of your work
- Special materials / services provided that relate to the community

T = Trustworthy: Finally, your message should suggest that you are trustworthy and the best way to do that is to be clear you’ll follow-up. This says to the person you’re talking to that you are in this discussion for the long haul.

- 8) **Offer to Help:** Ask what REALTORS can do to help during this unique time in political and policy history. It is important that your Member of Congress sees you as a resource.

After the Meeting

- 9) **Send Thank You:** Be sure to thank your Member of Congress and their staff for taking time out of their busy schedules for the meeting.
- 10) **Share Economic Infographic and NAR/RPR Economic Area Reports:** If you have not already done so, make sure to share all contents of your e-packet including the [NAR Economic Infographic](#) and [State by State Economic Area Reports](#).